



**PRESS RELEASE**

Press Contact: Katya Heller

For Immediate Release: May 6, 2020

p: 212.414.4014

e: [katya@hellergallery.com](mailto:katya@hellergallery.com)

**KATHERINE GRAY | *RADIANT MIRAGE***

May 15 – July 10, 2020

Opens online



*Hidden Pearl Entity, 2020*

Heller Gallery is pleased to present *Radiant Mirage*, our second solo exhibition of new works by Los Angeles-based artist Katherine Gray. As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and the ensuing government-ordered shutdowns in New York, Katherine Gray's *Radiant Mirage* will initially open online. We hope to install the exhibition in the gallery, once the restrictions are lifted.

In preparation for her *Radiant Mirage* exhibition, Katherine Gray has turned her considerable glass-making skills to creating objects that serve two purposes: to bring beauty into a dire moment in the world, but also to express her frustration over the loss of our collective sense of security and well-being. The common thread is her use of iridescence, an optical phenomenon seen in nature and inspired by unearthed ancient glass. Chemical processes to apply it to glass, were developed and made highly fashionable by America's first star glass artist, Louis Comfort Tiffany, as well as the Austrian Czech company Loetz. NASA scientists have employed more recent formulas in the development of the spacecraft.

In a conversation before the onset of the pandemic Gray said that the elusiveness and shiftiness of iridized objects -- their psychedelic high and deceptive low -- was what drew her to delve deeper into exploring the potential of this technique. Her decidedly minimalist objects, which she titles *Entities* and *Tubes*, seem more like a 21<sup>st</sup> century play on sublime modernist pieces, than works historically associated with iridized glass. They use perspective and light to project an ephemeral shape we cannot fully grasp. And yet the same iridescence that gives her new pieces a sense of disquieting ambiguity is also employed to flood the viewer with vibrant visual delight. Like natural phenomena that are caused by the refraction of light, Gray's *Radiant Mirage* works lure us in, as we try to capture the seemingly vanishing. It is with this exuberant optical illusion that Katherine Gray makes her call for regaining control.

The Los Angeles Times has praised Gray's works for 'emphasizing the broad potential of the medium.' She has employed the stealth qualities of the material and the history of glassblowing to comment eloquently on larger issues she is passionate about: the environment, society and community. Gray's practice is focused on the material qualities of glass itself: its ability to become mundane and physically invisible in its quotidian, scientific and technological use, ungraspable and psychologically absent, but also to be the substance of the sublime.

Canadian born, Katherine Gray is a graduate of the Ontario College of Art and the Rhode Island School of Design, is perhaps best known for her current appearance as the 'Resident Evaluator' (aka judge) for Netflix's reality TV show *Blown Away*. Her works are held in the permanent collections of public institutions including the Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, OH; Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, NY; Museum of American Glass, Wheaton, NJ; the Museum of Glass, Tacoma, WA, New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe, NM, and Toyama City Institute of Glass Art, Toyama, Japan. Gray is a Professor at California State University San Bernardino.